WHY FIRST ALERT SYSTEM TEXT USES SMPP PROTOCOL?

Myth 1: All SMS (Short Message Service) messaging is created equally...**FALSE!** This is a common misconception; there are two formats for sending SMS messages; SMTP (Short Message Transfer Protocol) and SMPP (Short Message Peer to Peer). Virtually all companies providing emergency alert notification services to government agencies typically allow them access to an email server capable of sending 'Email to Text' messages using SMTP (Short Message Transfer Protocol). Unfortunately, SMTP is subject to the same restrictions placed on sending regular bulk email (i.e. the messages can be delayed, blocked and/or superceded by standard voice traffic) and was never intended for assured emergency notification.

Myth 2: Carriers approve of bulk SMTP traffic delivered across their network...
False! When asked, all cell carriers will clearly state, they do not allow bulk SMS or 'Email to text messages' to be sent across their network. The only way to assure delivery of emergency messages over the cell carrier's network is to have their prior approval and permission to specifically use the SMPP protocol on their network.

First Alert System Text (FAST) has developed agreements and received approval from all major cell carriers to use the SMPP protocol across their networks.

As reported on March 28, 2006 by the President's National Security communications Advisory Committee:

..."Peer-to-peer (P2P) networking offers a distributed alternative to legacy centralized network structures, and offers value during times of network stress or compromise to infrastructures or services. Characteristic features of P2P networking include:
• Applications are available when the network path between peers is available. No other supporting infrastructure is required to enable this connectivity. This allows a specific group of NS/EP users to fully utilize P2P-based applications even though this user community may be isolated from the greater NGN. For example, emergency workers, using mobile devices in a devastated area, are readily able to send and receive text and images between themselves on an isolated network.
• Instant messages (IM) using conventional messaging service require establishment of two sessions, with one between the sender and the messenger cloud and a second between the recipient and the messenger cloud. By use of peer-to-peer networking, bandwidth use is highly efficient, in that the IM session message traffic passes only between the connected peers."...

Acronyms:
P2P - Peer to Peer
IM - Instant Messages
NGN - Next Generation Networks
NCS - National Communication System
NS/EP - National Security and Emergency Preparedness

First Alert System Text

How FAST Works

First Alert System Text (FAST) is a nationwide emergency alert notification service allowing Federal, State and Local Emergency Operations Centers, including police and fire agencies, to access the subscribers in their chosen geographical area(s)

Using any computer or communication device connected to the internet, a user with administrative rights can send emergency alert notifications from a secure login area which displays only the information related to the user's geographic or group responsibility.

These agencies are also able to send messages specifically directed to their personnel in order to respond to current and localized emergency situations.

Approved licensed agencies are provided a simple way to manage the emergency communications sent to first responders and time sensitive notifications sent to the general public.

First responders who receive emergency notices in the field are prompted to immediately respond to the emergency operations control center, validating that the message was both received and can be complied with; a critical component of the FAST Assured Delivery platform.
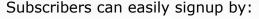
Benefits For Residents

Residents who sign up under the FAST emergency alert service will receive emergency notices for all requested areas (i.e. zip codes) and authorized groups (i.e. schools) located in the United States. In the interest of public safety, FAST is committed to offering administrative access to any emergency operations center, government agency, school or college and will consider other organizations desiring access on a case by case basis.

The network is supported through a shared responsibility model in which the subscriber pays a nominal monthly fee to be notified in the event of:

- Terrorism Threat
- Chemical Spills
- Dam Failure
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Flood
- Hurricane
- Landslide Threat

- Law Enforcement Assistance
- Life Threatening Concern
- Tornado
- Tsunami
- Winter Storm
- Natural Disaster
- Missing Person
- Abduction

Subscribers can easily signup by:

1. Going to the website, www.FirstAlertText.com, and clicking on 'Sign Up for Alerts' link and following the easy instructions.
   - Later changes and additions can be made by returning and clicking on 'Profile Login' at any time.
2. Simply texting the word "FAST" followed by a blank space and their 5 digit zip code into their personal cell phone AND then sending that message using the code 47733. This method is similar to casting a vote on American Idol and other reality shows and thus provides an easy method for mass adoption of the FAST emergency alert service.
   - After sending this text message, the subscriber will receive a response notifying them that they are subscribing to the National Emergency Alert Service, and there will be a cost of 99 cents per month. To accept, they press "Y" for Yes. This charge will thereafter appear on their cell carrier's monthly bill.
   - Subscribers may opt out at any time. To discontinue, subscribers simply text the word "STOP" or "QUIT" to the code 47733, whereby all alerts and charges will cease.

Public Service Announcements will be the preferred method to inform the general public about the FAST national emergency alert system and show them how to subscribe. Schools or PTAs will send subscription information home with students to inform parents and families.

Benefits to Counties, Cities and Schools

There is no cost to the States, Counties or Colleges to belong to the FAST system. This service is licensed to them in the interest of public safety. Less effective systems are being sold and/or licensed by other companies for tens of thousands of dollars. Unfortunately, without assurances and agreements with the major U.S. cell phone carriers, there is a high likelihood of failure should a mass delivery of SMTP based emergency messages occur.

Because FAST is a National System, all emergency agencies, schools and colleges can access any alert issued in the United States. For example, a resident in one state can activate the system for zip codes in any other state. An individual that subscribes as a member of a particular school group is automatically included in their particular chosen zip codes. Also, that same individual can be a member of multiple school or community groups. There is no other application that provides this flexibility. FAST allows the smallest school, city or county to provide emergency notification to everyone…its residents, students, emergency responders, and visitors.

Licensed agencies are given access to 24/7/365 live support.

In addition, FAST makes emergency pagers virtually obsolete. Several counties in Florida are now in the process of replacing their emergency pagers with the FAST application. This can lead to huge savings with better service, as pager systems can easily cost 5-10 times more than FAST and are limited to specific geographic areas.

Partners and Approved Cell Carriers

FAST has partnered with VeriSign and is approved to send emergency alert notifications with each carrier shown below with the trusted assurance of VeriSign. Sign up is simple, fast and assured. Each carrier will bill under the line item "National Emergency Alert Service". (Note: Because of unforeseen circumstances, we recommend using multiple emergency notification providers and services when possible).

- Alltel
- AT&T (Cingular)
- Cincinnati Bell
- Cricket
- Dobson
- Nextel/Boost
- Rural Cellular
- Sprint

- SunCom Wireless
- T-Mobile
- US Cellular
- Verizon
- Virgin Mobile USA

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FAST
First Alert System Text

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